

REMARKS

The herein amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated June 17, 2004, in which claims 1-8, 10 and 11 were rejected variously, under § 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and § 35 U.S.C. 103(a), upon application of U.S. Pat. No. 5,950,259 to Boggs, U.S. Pat. No. 6,109,685 to Linsey et al., and U.S. Des. Pat. No. 352,635 to Yoder. Claims 9 and 12 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims. The Office Action noted that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Applicant gratefully acknowledges the examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in these claims and the allowance of claims 13-16.

By this amendment, the allowable subject matter of claim 12 has been incorporated into original independent claim 1 and claim 12 has been cancelled. New independent claim 17 has been added. This claim consists of the subject matter of original independent claim 1 and the allowable subject matter of original dependent claim 9, which also includes the subject matter of claims 2 and 8, from which claim 9 depends. New claims 18-20 depend from claim 17. Thus, newly amended independent claim 1 and newly submitted independent claim 17, both comprising the subject matter indicated by the examiner to be allowable are now, themselves, allowable, as are their respective dependent claims.

All currently pending claims in the application now being allowable, the application itself is in condition for allowance.

If the examiner, upon review of the herein amendment, believes additional changes may be appropriate to advance the prosecution of this application, he is requested to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

HOLLSTEIN KEATING
CATTELL JOHNSON & GOLDSTEIN P.C.

By: 

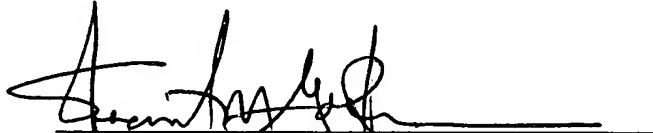
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Dated: August 10, 2004



CERTIFICATION OF SERVICE

I certify that the Amendment After First Office Action was sent to Stephen A. Vu, Examiner, Art Unit 3636, Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, via Express Mail # EV 440913789 US on August 10, 2004.


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